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To the honorable Assembly of Commons, in house of Parliament.

The humble Petition of his Maiesties much grieued and distressed subiects and seruants belonging to his Highnesse great Wardrobe, whose names are here vnder-written, with others their artificers and dependants, to the number of two thousand persons or there about.

IN most lamentable wise, shewing that whereas your suppliants, according to their seuerall trades and occupations, haue from time to time for diuers yeares past, by especial warrant and direction from the Kings Maiestie, prepared and prouided for his Highnesse vse all maner and sorts of such wares and furniture as his Highnesse needed, as well for his Royall person, as for his other seruice appertaining to his said Wardrobe; for prouiding whereof, your Suppliants haue not onely ingaged all their owne estates and their friends, but are also become exceedingly indebted vnto others, and all to supply from time to time his Maiestie with things fitting for his seruice as aforesaid: for all which (your Suppliants doe not doubt but that) it was his Maiesties royall pleasure and gracious appointment that your Suppliants should haue had conuenient payment and satisfaction in some due season from the Maister of his Highnesse said great VVardrobe for the time being, who (as your Suppliants beleeue it to be true) had assigned and paid vnto him out of his Highnesse Treasurie of the Exchequer yearely great and valuable summes of money for that purpose: yet now so it is, that for the space of sixe yeares and vpwards last past, during which time the Lord Hayes now Viscount Doncaster was Master of the said VVardrobe, your Suppliants haue had and receiued towards satisfaction of their great disbursements very small summes of money, but were still drawne on with faire promises of paiment, which made them runne out further and further, and to ingage their and their friends credits deeper and deeper, in so much that his Maiestie is at this present indebted vnto your Suppliants (in whose names this petition is exhibited) in the summe of one hundred and twentie thousand pounds or neare thereabout, almost fortie thousand pounds whereof doe arise and is due amongst your suppliants for things prepared for his Maiesties late progresse into Scotland; for all which (as your suppliants are informed) his Maiestie gaue order and command, that your suppliants should haue present mony, notwithstanding for that very expedition some of your suppliants who laid out great summes of mony thereabouts, haue receiued no paiment at all, and the rest but very small, the want whereof hath so grieuously impeached and worne out the estates and credits of your poore suppliants, that many of them are vndone thereby. And moreouer, which is more irksome and grieuous to your suppliants, his Lordship doth keepe and withhold from your suppliants their seuerall bils manifesting their debts, and doth neglect and delay to make vp, perfect and declare any accompt at all concerning the same to the Auditors of his Highnesse Exchequer, according to the ancient vse and custome of that Office, whereby your suppliants debts may appeare to be due from his Maiestie; by reason whereof your suppliants know not how to come by any their moneys, but do vndergo many hazards of losing the same, besides in the interim they faile and breake promise with their friends and creditors to whom they stand ingaged and indebted, and to great numbers of their artificers and handicrafts people by them in his Maiesties said seruice employed, in so much that many of them are euery day by reason thereof clamored on and discredited, and threatned to be arrested and imprisoned, which is a wofull and continuall perplexitie and griefe of heart to them and theirs, for that the same doth tend to the vtter ruine and ouerthrow of them, their friends, and families for euer.

In tender commiseration whereof, & for that your Suppliants said grieuances are no lesse grieuous then the worst that euer cried out vnto you for redresse, through which so many persons are like to be ruined and vndone: and for that your suppliants haue no wayes nor meanes to be relieued against the said Viscount Doncaster by course of law, nor elsewhere to complaine, but onely to this supreme House of iustice, whither also his Maiestie hath willed your suppliants to repaire for reliefe. That you will be pleased to take these your suppliants said grieuances (amongst the rest) into your graue considerations: and to cause the said Viscount Doncaster to deliuer in your suppliants said bils vnto the Clerke of the Wardrobe, and to declare and perfect his accompts to the Auditors of his Maiesties Exchequer, that so your suppliants debts may appeare to be debts due and owing by his Maiestie, and what they amount vnto, and be allowed and confirmed; otherwise your suppliants said debts not appearing to be, they haue iust cause to despaire the paiment of them. And withall to signifie to the Kings most excellent Maiestie those the lamentable grieuances of vs his said distressed subiects and seruants, to the end some course may be taken for their ease and reliefe herein; and they shall euer pray, &c.

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